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OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

June 17, 1996

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

The Honorable Bob Wise  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2434 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-4802

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Dear Congressman Wise:

Thank you for your letter of May 8, 1996, regarding implementation of Section 254(h) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. As you know, new Section 254(h) helps to ensure that schools, libraries and rural health care providers will have access to the information highway. Your endorsement of the critical nature of Section 254(h) will assist us in ensuring proper implementation of the Section.

A Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service has been convened to make recommendations to the Commission regarding implementation of Section 254 of the Act. We held a meeting of the Joint Board on April 12, 1996, and hosted experts from the fields of education and telemedicine to hear their views on how best to implement the Act. We are also reviewing the large number of comments received pursuant to the Universal Service rulemaking proceeding and expect to receive innovative suggestions regarding implementation of these provisions. The Joint Board will present its recommended decision to the Commission by November 8, 1996.

A copy of your letter has been included in the record of the universal service proceeding (CC Docket No. 96-45). Your recommendations and views will be carefully considered by the Joint Board

The Commission and the Federal-State Joint Board are committed to implementation of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 in a way that benefits all Americans, particularly schools and libraries. We appreciate your continued interest in these important issues.

Sincerely yours,

Reed E. Hundt  
Chairman

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BOB WISE  
2D DISTRICT, WEST VIRGINIA

COMMITTEES  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
& INFRASTRUCTURE  
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM  
& OVERSIGHT

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-4802**

May 8, 1996

WASHINGTON OFFICE  
2434 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515 4802  
(202) 225 2711  
DISTRICT OFFICES:  
107 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE  
CHARLESTON, WV 25302  
(304) 342 7170  
222 W. JOHN STREET  
MARTINSBURG, WV 25401  
(304) 264 8810

The Honorable Reed Hundt  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street NW Rm 802  
Washington, D.C. 20554-0001

Dear Chairman Hundt:

I am writing to urge you and the members of the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service to act swiftly and decisively to fully implement Section 254: Universal Service of the Telecommunications Act, particularly Subsection (h): Telecommunications Services for Certain Providers. These provisions are intended to guarantee affordable telecommunications rates to out nation's schools, libraries and rural health care facilities, thus ensuring that they are able to reap the benefits of the National Information Infrastructure.

We are clearly witnessing a revolution in the way we do business and the way we live. The telecommunications and information revolution is as important to our future as the industrial revolution was in the last century. It is imperative that schools, libraries and rural health facilities be able to participate fully in the benefits of an Information Age. Telecommunications technology can help us provide a world class education to school children across America. It can ensure that all citizens, through their community libraries, have access to the same rich information sources. Telemedicine can help us provide all Americans, regardless of where they live, access to affordable, quality health care. Section 245 (h) was drafted to make sure this happens.

Implementation of Section 254 (h) will require creative efforts and consistent oversight to ensure that the provisions and the discounts meet the needs of schools, libraries and rural health facilities. Congress fully intended to ensure all schools and libraries have affordable access to telecommunications services so that a nation of telecommunications "haves" and "have nots" does not develop. Thus Congress specified that discounts should be directed to individual schools and libraries rather than to states. To fulfill the intent of the law, every school and library submitting a bona fide request should receive the discount necessary to ensure affordable access to the educational telecommunications services. It is also essential for

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The Honorable Reed Hundt -- Page 2

definitions of special services and advanced services to be modified as technology changes and develops.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Wise', written in a cursive style.

Bob Wise  
Member of Congress

BW:jem